WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A device selecting apparatus for selecting an appropriate device from a number of devices connected to a network, said apparatus comprising:

5   a detecting unit which detects all the devices connected to said network;

an extracting unit which extracts profiles comprising information relating to categories of said devices;

a table creating unit which creates a table containing
10   priority rankings for the use of said devices;

an integrated profile creating unit which creates an integrated profile comprising information obtained by integrating the profiles of said devices;

a user interface creating unit which creates a user
15   interface enabling necessary categories to be selected from the categories which comprise the integrated profile created by said integrated profile creating unit; and

a selecting unit which selects a device as a device to be used out of said devices based on the selected categories
20   and the table containing the priority rankings.

2.   The device selecting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said integrated profile creating unit creates the integrated profile by integrating the most highly capable
25   categories among the profiles of said devices.

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3.   The device selecting apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said user interface creating unit creates a user
interface which displays information relating to the
categories comprising the integrated profile with respect to
5   a user on a display screen and enables the user to select
necessary categories from the categories displayed on said
display screen.

4.   The device selecting apparatus according to claim 1
10   further comprising a memory unit which stores the profiles
extracted by said extracting unit,
       wherein, when said selecting unit has consulted the
stored profiles and determined that there is no device
comprising all the categories which have been selected via the
15   user interface, said selecting unit selects said device out
of said devices which comprises a part of the selected
categories.

5.   The device selecting apparatus according to claim 4,
20   wherein when a new category has been selected via said user
interface after said device has been selected, said selecting
unit reselects said device by including the category which has
been selected this time by priority in said part of the
categories.

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6.   The device selecting apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said devices are printers.

7.   A device selecting method for selecting an appropriate
5   device from a number of devices connected to a network, said
method comprising the steps of:

providing beforehand a table containing an integrated
profile, comprising information obtained by integrating
profiles comprising information relating to categories of said
10   devices connected to said network, and priority rankings for
the use of said devices;

creating a user interface which enables necessary
categories to be selected from the categories comprising the
integrated profile; and

15   selecting a device as a device to be used out of said
devices based on the selected categories and the table
containing the priority rankings.

8.   The device selecting method according to claim 7,
20   wherein the integrated profile are created in the step of
providing table by integrating the most highly capable
categories among the profiles of said devices.

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9.   The device selecting method according to claim 7,
wherein a user interface is created in the step of creating
a user interface which displays information relating the
categories comprising the integrated profile with respect to
5   a user on a display screen and enables the user to select
necessary categories from the categories displayed on said
display screen.

10.   The device selecting method according to claim 7 further
10   comprising a step of providing the profiles beforehand,
wherein, when the stored profiles have been consulted
and it has been determined that there is no device comprising
all the categories which have been selected via the user
interface, said device out of said devices which comprises a
15   part of the selected categories is selected in the step of
selecting a device.

11.   The device selecting method according to claim 10,
wherein when a new category has been selected via said user
20   interface after said device has been selected, said device is
reselected in the step of selecting a device by including the
category which has been selected this time by priority in said
part of the categories.

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12.   The device selecting method according to claim 7, wherein said devices are printers.

13.   A computer readable medium for storing instructions, which when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform the steps of:

detecting all the devices connected to a network;

extracting profiles comprising information relating to categories of said devices;

creating a table containing priority rankings for the use of said devices;

creating an integrated profile comprising information obtained by integrating the profiles of said devices;

creating a user interface enabling necessary categories to be selected from the categories which comprise the integrated profile; and

selecting a device as a device to be used out of said devices based on the selected categories and the table containing the priority rankings.

14.   The computer readable medium according to claim 13, wherein the integrated profile are created in the step of providing table by integrating the most highly capable categories among the profiles of said devices.

15. The computer readable medium according to claim 13, wherein a user interface is created in the step of creating a user interface which displays information relating the categories comprising the integrated profile with respect to

5 a user on a display screen and enables the user to select necessary categories from the categories displayed on said display screen.

16. The computer readable medium according to claim 13

10 further comprising a step of providing the profiles beforehand,

wherein, when the stored profiles have been consulted and it has been determined that there is no device comprising all the categories which have been selected via the user

15 interface, said device out of said devices which comprises a part of the selected categories is selected in the step of selecting a device.

17. The computer readable medium according to claim 16,

20 wherein when a new category has been selected via said user interface after said device has been selected, said device is reselected in the step of selecting a device by including the category which has been selected this time by priority in said part of the categories.

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18.   The computer readable medium according to claim 13,
wherein said devices are printers.